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REX MORGAN, M.D. TALKS...

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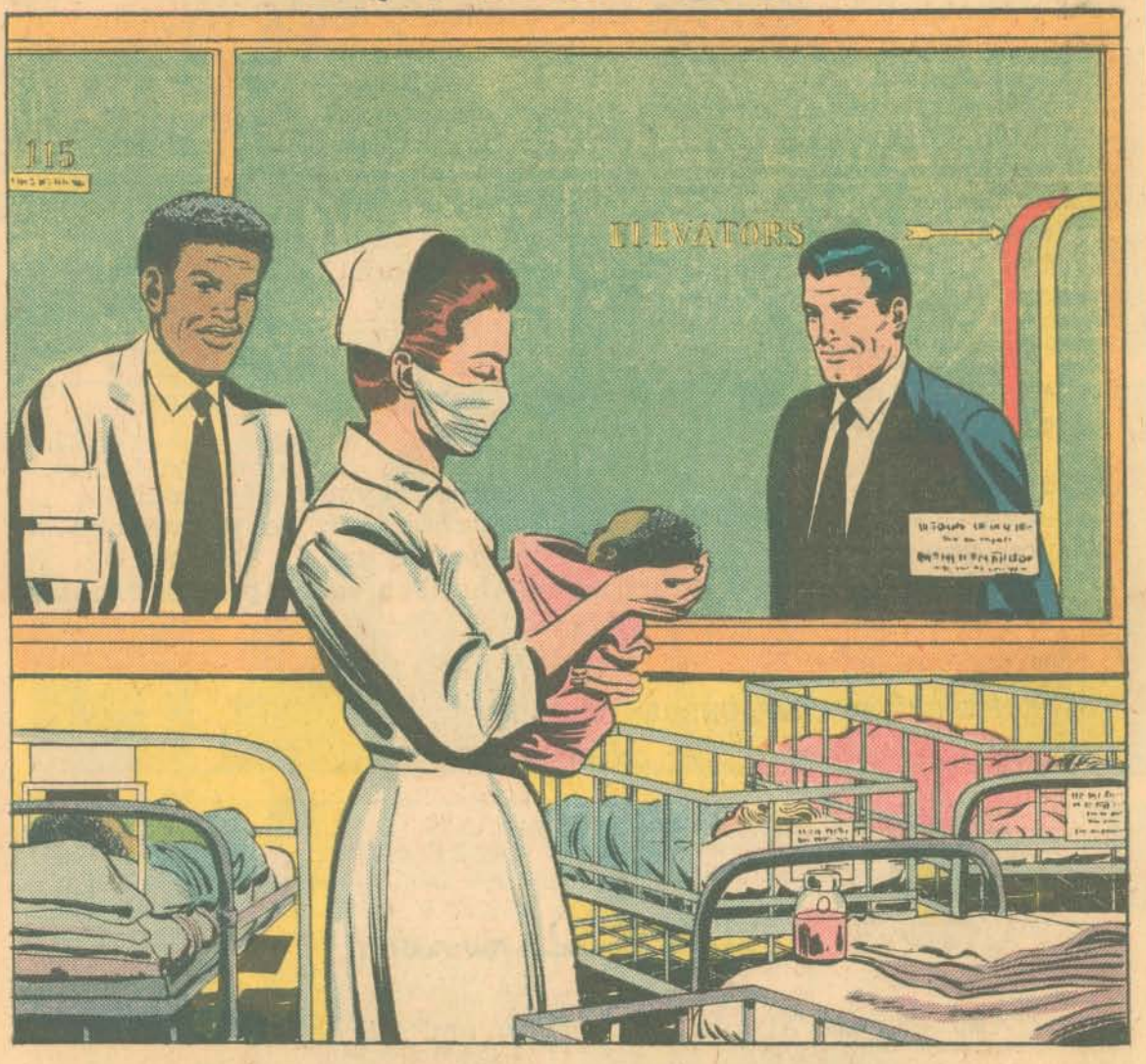

...ABOUT YOUR UNBORN CHILD!

Department of the Treasury
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms

Dear Reader:

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms is sponsoring this booklet to tell you that drinking during pregnancy can threaten the health of unborn children.

The unborn child gets its nourishment from the mother. What she eats or drinks, the infant shares - - including alcoholic beverages. Research has shown that women who drink heavily during pregnancy risk giving birth to infants who suffer from a variety of physical and/or mental defects, a condition known generally as "Fetal Alcohol Syndrome."

How much alcohol does it take to trigger defects in a developing infant? No one knows for sure, and more research is needed.

We do know that - - unlike some other types of birth defects - - the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome can be prevented. If you are pregnant, get good prenatal care, and get advice from your doctor or other health care professional on drinking during pregnancy.

THINK FIRST OF YOUR UNBORN CHILD!

Sincerely,

G. R. Dickerson

Director
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms

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AT CITY HOSPITAL, DR. REX MORGAN STOPS BY THE NURSERY WITH A RESIDENT PHYSICIAN TO SEE A ***NEWBORN, JUST HOURS OLD...***

SHE'S A BEAUTY, DR. BALLARD! HAVE YOU NAMED HER YET?

WE NAMED HER SUZANNE. JEAN AND I HAD A PACT! IF IT WERE A BOY, SHE'D SELECT THE NAME! IF IT WERE A GIRL, I WOULD!

IT'S NOT THE SEX OF THE BABY THAT'S IMPORTANT BUT THE FACT THAT SHE'S ALERT AND HEALTHY!

RIGHT! AND I'M REAL PROUD OF MY WIFE FOR TAKING SUCH GOOD CARE OF HERSELF FROM THE MOMENT WE PLANNED TO HAVE A CHILD!

IN ADDITION TO WATCHING HER DIET, SHE CHOSE TO QUIT SMOKING AND DRINKING ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES!

AND YOU ENCOURAGED HER! TOO MANY PEOPLE DON'T REALIZE THAT A CHILD'S ENTIRE FUTURE CAN BE DETERMINED IN THOSE NINE MONTHS BEFORE BIRTH!

MEANWHILE...

I'M SORRY BUT DR. MORGAN IS NOT IN THE OFFICE! MAY I HELP YOU?

THIS IS KEN LAMSON, MISS GALE! MY WIFE CUT HER HAND-- AND IT'S BLEEDING PRETTY BAD! SHE'S GOT TO SEE A DOCTOR!

TAKE HER TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM AT CITY HOSPITAL! I'LL HAVE DR. MORGAN MEET YOU THERE!

EXCUSE ME, DR. MORGAN! YOUR OFFICE CALLED! A KEN LAMSON IS BRINGING HIS WIFE INTO EMERGENCY... A BADLY LACERATED HAND!
THANK YOU!

I'LL FINISH ROUNDS HERE, DR. BALLARD! WOULD YOU MIND GOING DOWN TO EMERGENCY AND TAKING A LOOK AT MRS. LAMSON WHEN SHE ARRIVES?
WILL DO... AND I'LL CALL YOU AFTER I'VE CHECKED HER!

WE'RE ALMOST AT THE HOSPITAL, LINDA! DON'T UNWRAP THAT TOWEL FROM YOUR HAND!
STOP YELLIN' AT ME, KENNY!
CITY HOSPITA

I CAN'T HELP IT... SEEING YOU LIKE THIS! YOU WOULDN'T HAVE CUT YOUR HAND IF YOU AND YOUR GIRLFRIENDS HADN'T BEEN DRINKING!

BUT YOU GOTTA ADMIT, THEY'RE PRETTY NICE... THROWIN' A PARTY FOR ME WHEN I TOLD THEM I WAS PREGNANT!
OKAY... BE CAREFUL!
CITY HOSPITAL

THAT MUST BE DR. MORGAN'S PATIENT COMING IN NOW! SHE HAS HER LEFT HAND WRAPPED IN A TOWEL!
SHE SEEMS TO HAVE TROUBLE WALKING! LET'S TAKE HER INTO EXAMINING ROOM NUMBER THREE!

ARE YOU THE LAMSONS? I'M DR. BALLARD! DR. MORGAN WILL BE DOWN SHORTLY! MAY I HELP YOU?

DO YOU FEEL WELL ENOUGH TO WALK, MRS. LAMSON?
SURE... I FEEL GREAT!

WE'LL HELP YOU GET ON THE TABLE!
OKAY... BUT WE GOTTA BE CAREFUL! I'M GONNA BE A MOTHER IN SIX OR SEVEN MONTHS...

WHEN'S THE BABY COMIN', KENNY? WHAT DID WE FIGURE... WAS IT SIX OR SEVEN MONTHS?
NEVER MIND THAT NOW... LET'S GET YOU ON THE TABLE!

OKAY, KENNY... BUT I GOTTA BE VERY CAREFUL NOT TO FALL OR NOTHIN'! RIGHT, DOCTOR?
RIGHT!

HOW DOES IT LOOK, DOCTOR?
IT'S A DEEP LACERATION! WE'D BETTER LET DR. MORGAN DECIDE HOW IT SHOULD BE HANDLED!

IT'S JUST POSSIBLE THAT HE'LL WANT YOUR WIFE TO STAY HERE IN THE HOSPITAL OVERNIGHT! WAIT HERE AND I'LL GET HIM!

HOW BAD IS IT?
SHE'S SEVERED AT LEAST ONE TENDON! SHE CAN'T FLEX THE THIRD FINGER!

THEN WE'D BETTER GET A SURGEON TO DO THE REPAIR! CALL DR. MACFARLAND WHILE I TAKE A LOOK AT IT!
SOMETHING ELSE YOU SHOULD KNOW... SHE'S BEEN DRINKING... AND QUITE A BIT!

YOU DON'T MEAN SHE HAS A DRINKING PROBLEM, DO YOU?
NO, I DON'T THINK SO! SHE'S JUST DISCOVERED SHE'S PREGNANT... AND SOME GIRLFRIENDS DECIDED THEY SHOULD CELEBRATE!

SHE OBVIOUSLY ISN'T AWARE OF THE IMPACT DRINKING MAY HAVE ON HER BABY! I'D BETTER TALK TO THE LAMSONS ABOUT THE *FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME!*

CONTACT THE ADMITTING OFFICE AND ASK THEM TO GET A BED! WE'LL PROBABLY WANT TO KEEP HER OVERNIGHT!

HELLO, MRS. LAMSON! I'M DR. MORGAN!
HEY, AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU! HOW ABOUT SEWIN' THIS THING UP AND LETTIN' ME OUTA HERE!

LET ME TAKE A LOOK AND THEN DECIDE!

I'M AFRAID YOU'VE SEVERED A TENDON AND WE SHOULD HAVE A SURGEON REPAIR IT... SO YOU'LL HAVE TO STAY OVERNIGHT!

NO, I DON'T WANNA STAY IN THE HOSPITAL...
UNLESS WE REPAIR THAT TENDON, YOU'LL BE LEFT WITH A FINGER YOU CAN'T BEND... AND THAT WOULD BE BAD WHEN YOU'RE CARING FOR AN ACTIVE BABY IN SIX OR SEVEN MONTHS!

HOW'D YOU KNOW I'M PREGNANT?
APPARENTLY YOU TOLD DR. BALLARD... AND HE TOLD ME!

NOW, JUST REST HERE FOR A FEW MINUTES BECAUSE WE'LL BE TAKING YOU UPSTAIRS!

IS LINDA'S HAND GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT, DR. MORGAN?
THERE SHOULDN'T BE ANY PROBLEM, KEN!

HOWEVER,..BECAUSE SHE'S PREGNANT AND HAS BEEN DRINKING, DR. MACFARLAND WILL PROBABLY DO THE SURGERY UNDER A LOCAL ANESTHETIC!

YOU MEAN THEY DON'T GIVE GENERAL ANESTHESIA TO PREGNANT WOMEN?
NOT IF IT CAN BE AVOIDED! THE DOCTOR ALWAYS KEEPS ONE THING IN MIND: WHEN YOU GIVE A DRUG TO THE MOTHER, YOU DO THE SAME TO THE UNBORN BABY...

"...AND WHEN A MOTHER TAKES A DRUG...WHETHER IT'S CAFFEINE, NICOTINE OR WHATEVER... SO DOES THE BABY!"

WHAT ABOUT ALCOHOL?
THE SAME IS TRUE OF BEER, WINE OR LIQUOR! IT NOT ONLY GOES INTO THE BLOODSTREAM OF THE MOTHER BUT THE UNBORN CHILD AS WELL!

CAN THAT HURT THE BABY?
WE'RE CERTAIN THAT HEAVY DRINKING INCREASES THE RISK OF FETAL HARM!

THIS DAMAGE CAN BE BOTH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL! MOST SEVERE IS WHAT WE NOW CALL THE FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME!

I'VE HEARD OF THE FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME... BUT THAT'S ONLY WHEN A WOMAN DRINKS A LOT, ISN'T IT... WHEN SHE'S AN ALCOHOLIC?

ACTUALLY, KEN... NO ONE KNOWS WHAT THE SAFE LEVEL OF DRINKING IS!

YOU SCARE ME WITH THAT KIND OF TALK, DR. MORGAN!
AND THAT IS ONE THING I DON'T WANT TO DO! BUT I DO THINK THAT YOU AND YOUR WIFE SHOULD BE GIVEN THE FACTS!

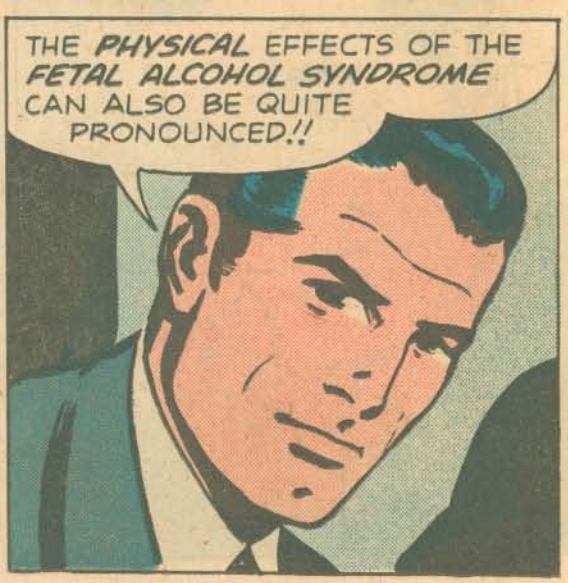
OF THE BIRTH DEFECTS WHICH INCLUDE MENTAL RETARDATION, FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME IS THE THIRD MOST COMMON... AND IT'S THE ONLY ONE WE KNOW CAN BE PREVENTED!

WE DIDN'T REALIZE THAT, DR. MORGAN! LINDA NEVER WOULD HAVE DRUNK WHAT SHE DID TODAY... IF SHE HAD KNOWN!
I UNDERSTAND, KEN! NO ONE WOULD!

DO THEY REALLY HAVE PROOF OF THOSE CLAIMS ABOUT ALCOHOL AND BIRTH DEFECTS?
BEYOND ALL DOUBT! BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT A DEFECT WILL OCCUR IN EVERY CASE OF ALCOHOL USE OR ABUSE!

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE DEFECTS WHICH MIGHT OCCUR?
THE CHIEF MENTAL DEFECT, OF COURSE, IS RETARDATION... BELOW NORMAL INTELLIGENCE AND A SLOWER THAN NORMAL LEARNING ABILITY!

THIS RETARDATION, OFTEN EXTREME, IS PERMANENT, KEN!


THE PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF THE FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME CAN ALSO BE QUITE PRONOUNCED!!

AT BIRTH, BABIES WITH *FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME* ARE SMALLER AND OFTEN REQUIRE SPECIAL CARE!

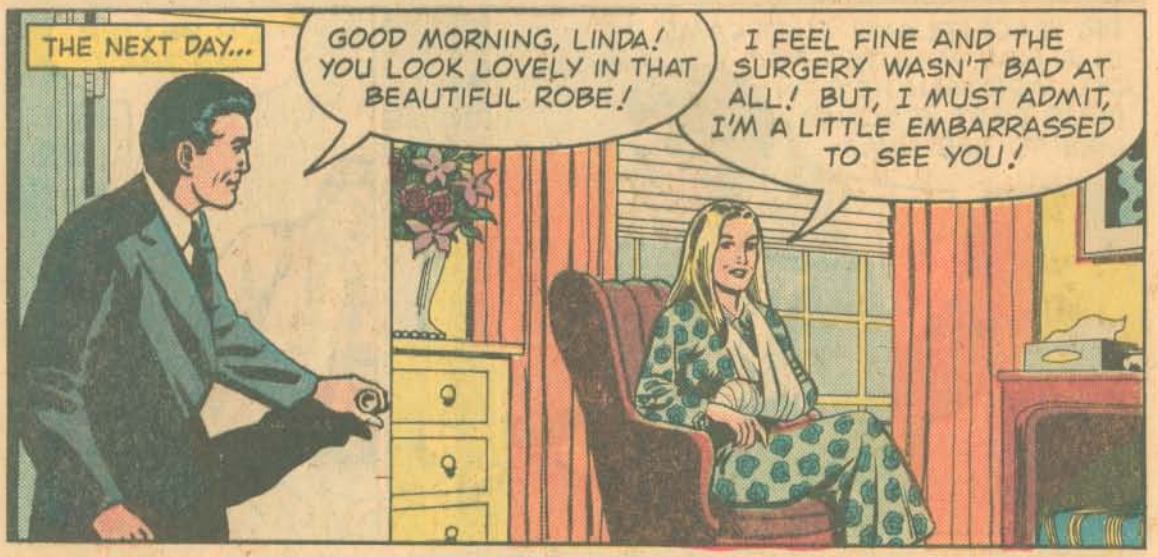
FACIAL FEATURES ARE NOT NORMAL... AND THESE INFANTS OFTEN LOOK *MORE LIKE EACH OTHER THAN THEY DO THEIR OWN FAMILIES!* HEART, BONE AND GENITAL DEFECTS ARE COMMON!

DR. MACFARLAND JUST CAME IN A FEW MINUTES AGO, DR. MORGAN! HE'S ON FOUR EAST IF YOU'D LIKE TO SEE HIM!
I'D BETTER DO THAT!

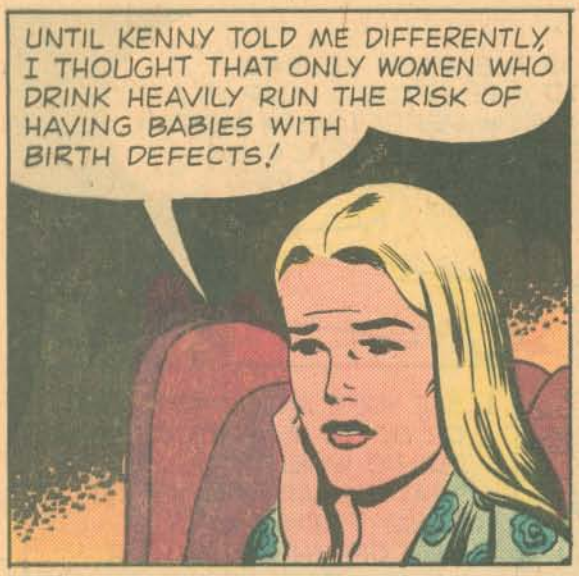
BY THE WAY, DR. BALLARD... KEN AND I HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT HIS WIFE'S PREGNANCY! AS A NEW FATHER YOURSELF, I'M SURE YOU CAN GIVE HIM SOME WORTHWHILE ADVICE!
BE GLAD TO! I'M NOW AN AUTHORITY!

I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU AN IMPORTANT QUESTION, MR. LAMSON! HAS YOUR WIFE BEEN SEEN BY A DOCTOR OR GONE TO A MATERNITY CLINIC SINCE DISCOVERING SHE IS PREGNANT?
NOT YET! WE FIGURED THERE WAS PLENTY OF TIME...

DON'T WAIT! THE DOCTOR CAN GIVE A LOT OF GOOD ADVICE TO YOU AND YOUR WIFE ON HOW TO DEAL WITH THE PREGNANCY! YOU OWE IT TO YOURSELVES... AND THE CHILD!

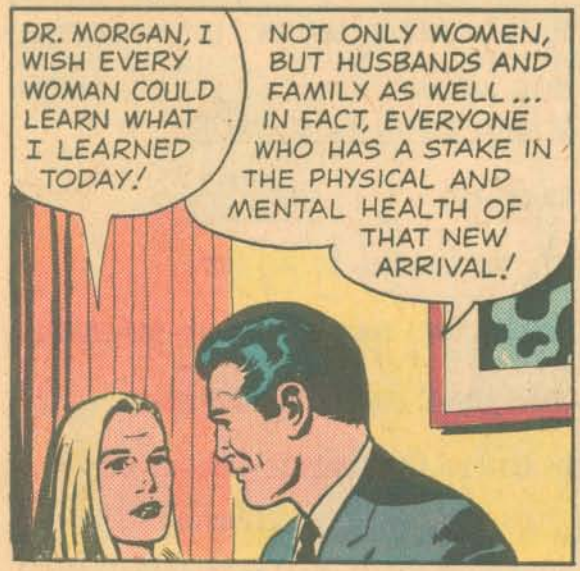

THE NEXT DAY...
GOOD MORNING, LINDA! YOU LOOK LOVELY IN THAT BEAUTIFUL ROBE!
I FEEL FINE AND THE SURGERY WASN'T BAD AT ALL! BUT, I MUST ADMIT, I'M A LITTLE EMBARRASSED TO SEE YOU!

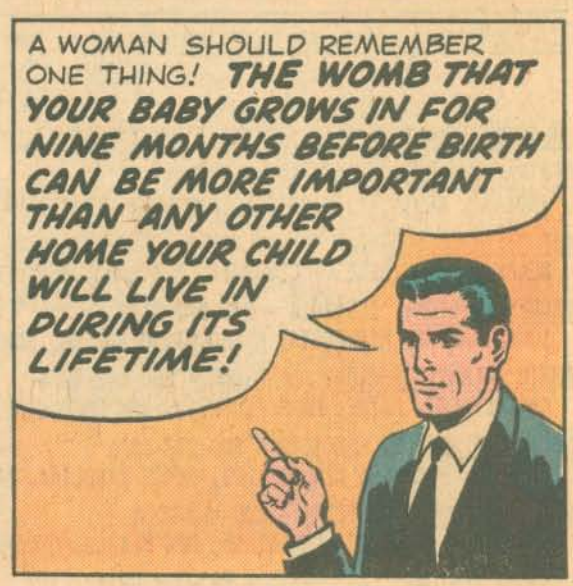
KENNY WAS HERE... JUST LEFT FOR WORK A FEW MINUTES AGO! HE TOLD ME ALL ABOUT HIS TALKS WITH YOU AND DR. BALLARD ABOUT PREGNANCY AND DRINKING!

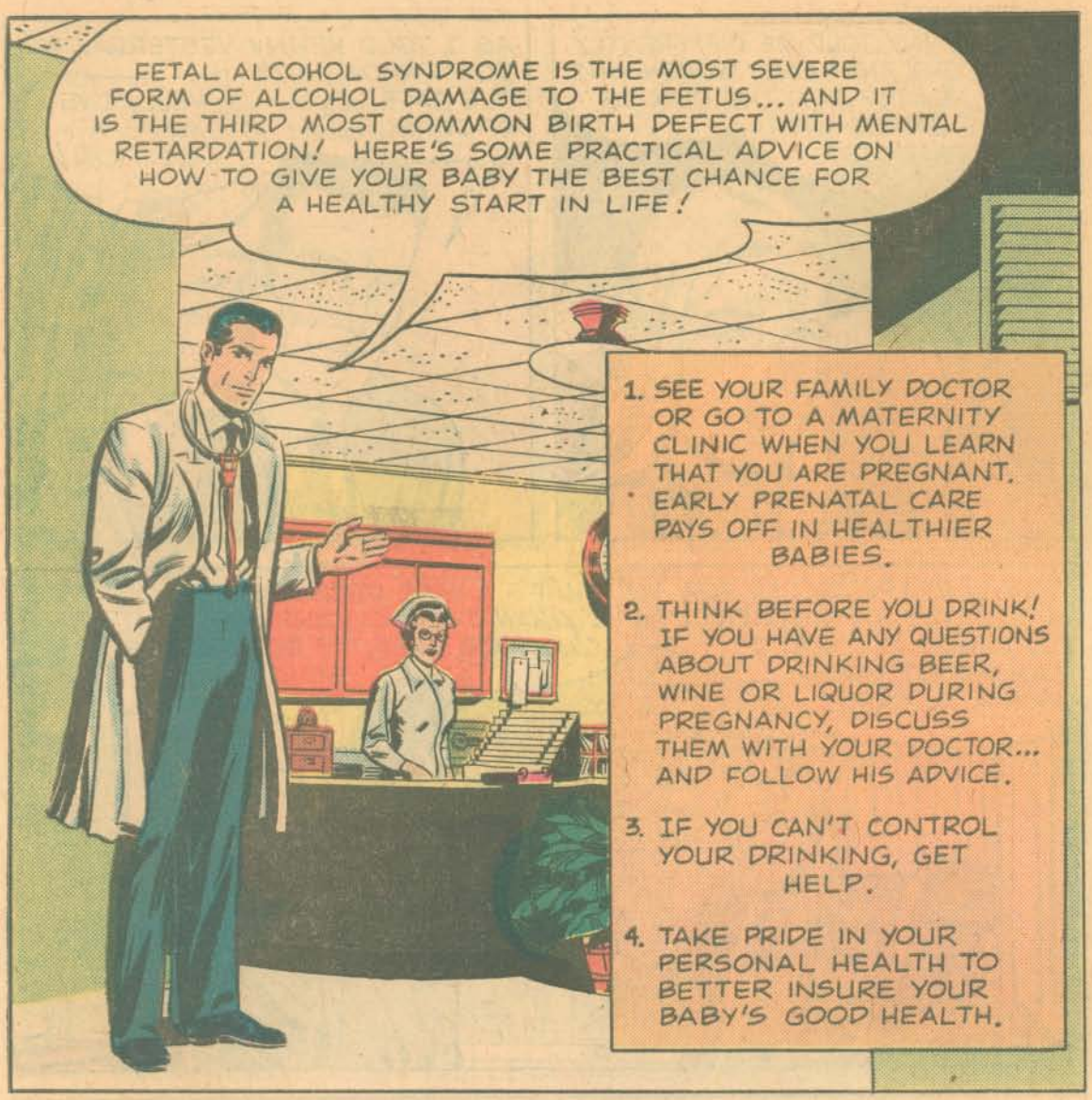

UNTIL KENNY TOLD ME DIFFERENTLY, I THOUGHT THAT ONLY WOMEN WHO DRINK HEAVILY RUN THE RISK OF HAVING BABIES WITH BIRTH DEFECTS!

AS I TOLD KENNY YESTERDAY, WE DON'T KNOW WHAT THE SAFE LEVEL OF DRINKING IS!
WELL, I'VE MADE A DECISION!

I'VE ALREADY CALLED FOR A DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENT... TO LEARN ALL THAT I CAN ABOUT GOOD PRENATAL CARE!
THAT'S A WISE DECISION, LINDA... BECAUSE I KNOW THAT YOU AND KEN WANT TO GIVE YOUR BABY THE BEST POSSIBLE START IN LIFE!


DR. MORGAN, I WISH EVERY WOMAN COULD LEARN WHAT I LEARNED TODAY!
NOT ONLY WOMEN, BUT HUSBANDS AND FAMILY AS WELL... IN FACT, EVERYONE WHO HAS A STAKE IN THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH OF THAT NEW ARRIVAL!


A WOMAN SHOULD REMEMBER ONE THING! THE WOMB THAT YOUR BABY GROWS IN FOR NINE MONTHS BEFORE BIRTH CAN BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN ANY OTHER HOME YOUR CHILD WILL LIVE IN DURING ITS LIFETIME!



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